

# Everybody Wins!



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## Why hire a student worker, especially one with a disability?

Because Everybody Wins: Students, Businesses, Schools & the Community!



## Program Philosophy

- ▶ FUSD recognizes that students whose talents are limited in traditional academic areas may perform well, and even excel in other areas.
- ▶ The Special Needs Work Experience Program offers students a vocational setting to assist them in realizing more fully their strengths and abilities while earning a credit, and often a paycheck.<sup>A</sup>



## The FUSD Special Needs Work Experience Program

- ▶ Provides work experiences for students with special needs so as to build upon students' vocational skills for future success in the working world.
- ▶ Some students are assisted with **job shadowing** opportunities.
- ▶ Some students are assisted with **supported** employment opportunities.
- ▶ Some students are assisted with **competitive** employment opportunities.
- ▶ Students **may** earn school credit for a positive work experience. One credit may be granted for each 120 hours worked, assuming an average of 5-10 hours weekly. A maximum of two credits can be granted each semester or over the summer.<sup>A</sup>

## Work Experience: Student Goals

### ▶ The student worker will develop:

#### ▶ Communication Skills:

- ▶ Ability to communicate effectively with employer
- ▶ Ability to communicate effectively with co-workers

#### ▶ Job Search Skills:

- ▶ Ability to complete employment applications
- ▶ Ability to successfully complete employment interviews

#### ▶ Successful Work Experience:

- ▶ Ability to work independently
- ▶ Ability to maintain high level of motivation towards work
- ▶ Ability to perform at work so as to maintain a high level of employment<sup>^</sup>



## Work Program: Student Responsibilities

- ▶ **Maintain positive, meaningful employment.** The student is expected to hold the same job for the entire semester unless the work situation is discussed with and evaluated by the Transition Facilitator.
- ▶ Work a minimum of 120 hours for one credit or 240 hours for two credits.
- ▶ Submit pay stubs or a log of hours worked (signed by employer or work supervisor) so as to document hours worked.
- ▶ Submit a minimum of two positive work evaluations (completed by employer or work supervisor) each semester.<sup>^</sup>



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## Student Responsibilities (cont.)

- ▶ To be prompt and dependable in attendance, both in school and on the job
- ▶ To perform all job requirements and responsibilities to the best of his/her ability
- ▶ To abide by all rules and regulations of employer
- ▶ To provide his/her own means of transportation to the work site
- ▶ To provide Transition Facilitator with necessary information about employer and/or place of employment
- ▶ To meet with Transition Facilitator at least twice each semester to review work performance and evaluations<sup>^</sup>



## FUSD Transition Facilitator's Role

- ▶ **The primary function of the Transition Facilitator is to provide transition services to students with special needs.**

### Specific responsibilities include:

- ▶ Assessing students' transition needs and assisting case managers in providing for those needs
- ▶ Developing job sites (including job shadows) and working relationships with employers in the community
- ▶ Assisting students with job-seeking skills including resume' development, letters of application, job applications, & interviewing skills
- ▶ Assisting students with learning "soft skills" needed to achieve and maintain positive employment<sup>^</sup>



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### FUSD Transition Facilitator's Role (cont.)

- › Communicating with employers to discuss student worker responsibilities, problems, progress, etc.
- › Providing worker supervision, coaching and other support to both the employer and the employee as needed
- › Counseling student workers regarding employment needs, problems, progress, evaluations, etc.
- › Awarding credit for work experience as is appropriate.
- › Assisting students in considering potential careers suited to their needs, interests and abilities<sup>^</sup>



### Parents' Role

- › To encourage their child/student to successfully perform his/her duties and responsibilities both in the classroom and on the job
- › To assist their child/student (as necessary) with work related logistical considerations including transportation, financial concerns (taxes, banking, etc.) time management, etc.
- › To monitor child/student's hours worked, ability to manage school and work, stress level, etc.
- › To contact the Transition Facilitator with any questions or concerns.<sup>^</sup>



### Employer's Role

- › Provide job shadow and/or employment
- › Provide pay if student is competitively employed
- › Provide reasonable job responsibilities, reasonable job duties and reasonable job expectations to student worker
- › Provide supervision
- › Periodically evaluate student worker performance
- › Contact Transition Facilitator with questions or concerns<sup>^</sup>



### Documentation

- › Students submit copies of timesheets, daily logs and/or pay stubs to the Transition Facilitators, who document hours worked and keep records for the program students on file.
- › "Work Experience Agreements" are used to ensure that all parties are knowledgeable of their respective responsibilities.



- › Paid Work Agreement
- › Unpaid (Supported or Job Shadowing) Work Agreement<sup>^</sup>

## Pay

- ▶ If student worker is in need of **supported employment**, payment for work performed can be provided by the student worker budget managed by the Transition Facilitator.
- ▶ In **competitive work environments**, payment for work performed will be provided by the employer. Minimum wage laws apply.<sup>^</sup>



## School Course Credit

- ▶ The FUSD Special Needs Work Experience Program is a job skills training program. As such, its **value** exists in the **training and experience** received, as well as the pay.
- ▶ Students enrolled in the program can receive **elective course credit**. This credit is awarded for **growth and achievement** displayed by the student related to employment skills.
- ▶ Credit is awarded at a rate of **1 credit per 120 hours** worked, with a maximum of 2 credits per semester or summer.
- ▶ In order to receive credit, the student worker must comply with the student responsibilities discussed previously. Of note, the student worker must receive **positive evaluations** from his/her employer.<sup>^</sup>

## FUSD Student Worker Sites

- ▶ Student worker positions have existed at the following FUSD sites:

- \*District Warehouse
- \*District Mail Room
- \*District Laundry
- \*District Print Shop
- \*District Bus Barn
- \*District Book Cage
- \*District Administrative Center
- \*Sinagua School- Little Ropers' Daycare
- \*Flagstaff High School- The Kids' Center Daycare
- \*District School Campus Sites:
  - \*Cafeteria Work
  - \*Library work
  - \*Custodial Work
  - \*Clerical Work<sup>^</sup>



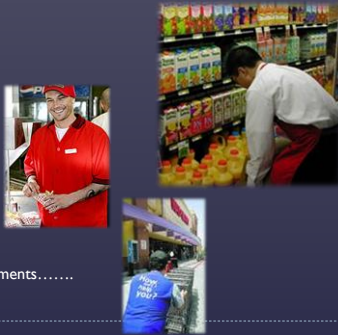
## Current Supported Employment Placements

- ▶ Goodwill Industry of Northern Arizona
- ▶ Southwest Food Services
- ▶ Northern Arizona University
- ▶ St. Mary's Food Bank
- ▶ SAVERS
- ▶ Second Chance Pets
- ▶ Lil' Ropers' Day Care
- ▶ Northland Hospice
- ▶ Flagstaff Public Library
- ▶ Flagstaff Parks & Recreation
- ▶ On campus placements  
(including CHS, FHS, Killip & Puente de Hozo)



## Current Competitive Employment Placements

- ▶ Flagstaff Mall
- ▶ Taco Bell
- ▶ Burger King
- ▶ McDonald's
- ▶ Target
- ▶ Wal-Mart
- ▶ Bashas'
- ▶ Safeway
- ▶ Fry's
- ▶ Albertson's
- ▶ Sam's Club
- ▶ Other business placements.....



## Insurance

- ▶ The Flagstaff Unified School District insurance program follows a student to his/her place of employment.
- ▶ The district can supply your business with a Certificate of Insurance for all students involved in either competitive or supportive employment at your business.
- ▶ The Technical Information Bulletin below contains relevant information from both Federal and State regulations regarding Student Work Programs:
  - ▶ [AZ Risk Retention Trust Bulletin #23](#)

## Why Hire Youth? Myths & Realities about Youth Employees

- ▶ **Myth:** Young workers are hard to train.
- ▶ **Reality:** Youth are usually flexible and take to training well.
- ▶ **Myth:** Young people have poor work skills.
- ▶ **Reality:** Skills are different than qualities. When interviewing youth, define qualities you are looking for. Skills can be taught.
- ▶ **Myth:** Young people are unmotivated towards work.
- ▶ **Reality:** Young workers are just starting a lifetime in the workplace. Most are very enthusiastic about taking on adult responsibilities, earning their own money, establishing independence, etc. ^



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## Myths & Realities (cont.)

- ▶ **Myth:** Young workers don't take feedback well.
- ▶ **Reality:** Young workers need more feedback than do adults, but they are also accustomed to receiving it from parents, teachers, etc.



- ▶ **Myth:** It's hard to find good young workers.
- ▶ **Reality:** Many young people today are looking for meaningful employment. Also, youth tend to be networked (through school, teams, church groups, Facebook, Craig's List, etc.) better than potential adult workers.
- ▶ **Myth:** Youth have a short attention span and are undependable.
- ▶ **Reality:** Youth can attend very well (if motivated to do so) and dependability is a learned skill. ^

## Value in Hiring Youth

- › Employment provides a young person the opportunity to shine, perhaps for the first time!
- › Employment provides a young person the experiences needed to be a competitive and productive employee now and in the future.
- › Employment provides a young person a vocational setting where he/she may realize his/her true strengths and abilities.
- › Youth are eager to learn new skills
- › Youth make good trainees (usually they have fewer preconceived notions about the workplace than adults)<sup>^</sup>



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## Value in Hiring Youth (cont.)

- › About 1 in 5 Americans are under the age of 21. Young workers represent a large segment of our society, a segment that often has disposable income.
- › Young consumers enjoy interacting with young workers.
- › Trained young workers tend to be loyal to their employers, both as workers and as consumers.
- › Youth are usually up to date on the latest technology.
- › Youth are usually less expensive to hire than are adults.
- › Youth tend to have a lot of energy.<sup>^</sup>



## Why hire people with Disabilities? Myths & Realities about People with Disabilities

- › **Myth:** People with disabilities are a small segment of the U.S. population.
- › **Reality:** People with disabilities are the largest single minority group (between 25 and 30% of the population) in the country.
- › **Myth:** Disabilities are unusual, permanent, medical conditions.
- › **Reality:** Disabilities are extremely common and are experienced by almost everyone at some time. Many disabilities are temporary and most do NOT have a physical aspect.
- › **Myth:** People with disabilities are limited in the work they can do.
- › **Reality:** We are ALL limited in the work we can do. Considering the ABILITIES of all workers increases productivity.<sup>^</sup>



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## Myths & Realities (cont.)

- › **Myth:** Job performance and productivity of workers with disabilities is lower than that of other workers.
- › **Reality:** A 30 year study by DuPont found that "Job performance and productivity by workers with disabilities exceeded fully functioning peers."
- › **Myth:** Employees with disabilities are more likely to be absent from work and will experience safety problems.
- › **Reality:** Employees with disabilities have above-average safety and attendance records. People with disabilities are also more likely to be loyal to the employer who hires and trains them. (DuPont)
- › **Myth:** Employees with disabilities will increase employers' insurance costs.
- › **Reality:** Federal law outlaws this. Also, FUSD covers all student workers. Lastly, the Work Incentives Improvement Act (1999) allows workers with disabilities to continue their Medicaid benefits when employed.
- › **Myth:** Employees with disabilities will be difficult to integrate efficiently into the workplace.
- › **Reality:** Workplaces integrating people with disabilities report increased camaraderie, collegiality and cooperation among all employees. (DuPont)<sup>^</sup>

## Value in hiring someone with a disability

- ▶ **Diversifying your workforce:** 30% of the community have experienced a disability of some sort. By diversifying your workforce to reflect the community, you can improve access to a significant segment of the market as well as improving public image and links with the community.
- ▶ **Technology:** Innovation and global competition have created more individualized relationships with consumers. Understanding disabilities will assist businesses in providing individualized services.
- ▶ **Flexibility and Competence:** Businesses need workers with a demonstrated ability to adapt to different situations and circumstances. People with disabilities daily are faced with unique challenges that require complex solutions. In the workplace this resourcefulness translates into innovation.<sup>^</sup>



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## Value in Hiring Someone with a Disability (cont.)

- ▶ Most employees with disabilities do **NOT** require accommodations to be successful at work. If they do, the cost of these accommodations are often **remunerated by the government**.
- ▶ **Productivity rates** (including work quality and task consistency) are **as good or better** for people with disabilities compared to other workers. (Virginia and Commonwealth University)
- ▶ Due to increased attention to detail, **workers with disabilities have better than average safety records at work**. (DuPont)
- ▶ Workers with disabilities average 5.1 **years of employment with the same employer** compared to 3.2 years for their non-disabled peers (U.S. Dept. of Labor)
- ▶ Workers with disabilities average 6.8 days absent annually, about **half that of their non-disabled peers**. (U.S. Dept. of Labor)<sup>^</sup>

## Financial Incentives

**Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** Authorizes federal funding (from the Rehabilitation Services Administration) to state **Vocational Rehabilitation** (VR) agencies to assist people with disabilities as they prepare for and enter the work force. VR can assist with barrier removal and provision of accommodations, can provide on-the job training and can share in the payment of wages for an employee with disabilities.

The VR staff can also assist employers with recruitment of workers with disabilities, can conduct job analyses and can provide disability awareness training for company personnel.

(contact your local Vocational Rehabilitation agency (928-779-4147) or see <https://www.azdes.gov/rsa> )<sup>^</sup>

## Financial Incentives (cont.)

- ▶ **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC):** This is a federal tax credit incentive that Congress provides to private-sector businesses for hiring individuals from 12 target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. "Disconnected" youth and workers with disabilities are 2 of the target groups. (see <http://www.dolleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/> )
- ▶ **Disabled Access Credit (DAC):** The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act contains a tax incentive to encourage small businesses to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Included are expenditures for removal of barriers for employees with disabilities, providing interpreters and other accommodations, modifying equipment, etc. (see your local Internal Revenue Service Office or <http://www.irs.gov/businesses> )

### What the FUSD Student Worker Program provides...

- › Competent and convenient assistance in receiving student worker referrals
  - › Access to an expanded labor pool
  - › Recruitment assistance
  - › Prescreening of applicants
  - › Assistance with employment paperwork
- › Matching of student worker skills and interests to employment positions and job duties
  - › Formal and informal assessment of potential student workers
  - › Knowledge of student worker capabilities and interests
  - › Understanding of employers' circumstances and needs
  - › Identification of tasks important to employer and student worker
  - › Customization of tasks, if necessary
  - › Provision of on-the-job accommodations, if necessary (cont.)



### What the program provides (cont.)

#### Timely support in training, supervising and monitoring student workers

- › Job skill training of pre-employment student workers
- › Job shadowing of future positions by pre-employment student workers
- › Job coaching for newly hired student workers
- › Assistance with supervision
- › Formal evaluation procedures
- › Assistance if a problem with a worker arises
- › Processing of employers' feedback

#### Pay for the student worker, if necessary

#### Formal and informal disability awareness

- › Disability awareness information
- › Information about providing accommodations
- › A model for appropriate support and social interaction for youth with disabilities



### Benefits for the Employer

- › Display of positive corporate citizenship
- › Diversification of current workforce
- › Development of future workforce in areas of specialized needs
- › Expansion of business outreach to under-represented communities
- › Expansion of formal mentoring of new employees (leading to increased employee loyalty, reduction in learning time and costs associated with the hiring of new employees, and expanded leadership development in employees.)
- › Assistance in training, coaching and supervising new employees
- › Potential financial incentives and support from governmental agencies.
- › **The student worker may be paid from the FUSD student worker budget** (also please see previous slides "Value in Hiring Youth" and "Value in Hiring Someone with a Disability" )^



### Benefits for the Student Worker

- › Growth in self confidence
- › Opportunity to develop work place skills
- › Learning about disability disclosure
- › Growth in self advocacy skills related to accommodations
- › Identification and clarification of potential career interests
- › Opportunity to learn about work place culture and expectations
- › Potential for long-term positive and meaningful employment
- › Connection of school learning with real-life application^





## Why hire a student worker?



Because everybody wins!



Thank You!

## Resources & Links

### › U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

1-866- 633-7365 <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs.htm>

ODEP is a US Department of Labor agency that provides national leadership to increase corporate opportunities to adults and youth with disabilities.

### › Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/DDPC/>

### › DisabilityInfo.gov Employer Resources Page

<http://www.disabilityinfo.gov/digov-public/DisplayPage.do?parentfolderID=11>

### › Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

(928)774-4147

State VR agencies can help employers identify qualified, job-ready candidates with disabilities to fill their workforce needs.

### › Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

1-800-526-7234

JAN is a free consulting service from ODEP that provides individualized accommodation solutions and technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability-related legislation.

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## Resources and Links (cont.)

### › Centers for Independent Living (CIL)

<http://www.cil.org>

CILs are community-based, nonprofit organizations that improve opportunities for people with disabilities to live independently and productively.

### › National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)

<http://www.ncset.org>

Includes national resources, technical help and information related to secondary education transition for youth with disabilities.

### › New Ways to Work

<http://www.nww.org>

Links to tools and guides, as well as a training curriculum for staff on work-based learning and a quick guide on safety and child labor laws.

### › Disability Employment Guide

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osea/products/employmentguide>

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## Resources and Links (cont.)

### › Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs)

<http://www.adasa.org/dbtac.html>

DBTACs offer information and assistance to employers with responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### › DisabilityInfo.gov

<http://www.disabilityinfo.gov>

Contains a broad array of disability-related information, including information on tax credits to offset potential accommodation cost.

### › Disability Awareness Information Kit

<http://www.openroad.net.au/access/dakini/disaware/disawarecontent.htm>

### › Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)

1-866-EARN-NOW (1-866-327-6669)

EARN is a free service that connects employers looking for quality employees who are skilled job candidates. EARN, which is a service of ODEP, can also provide technical assistance on general disability employment-related issues.

### Contact Information

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